

~~ADMINISTRATIVE INTERNAL USE ONLY~~

25 August 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Photo Section

THROUGH : Chief, Pictorial Services Branch

SUBJECT : Upgrading the Quality of Still Photography

1. The Chief, Support Services Group recently asked the Chief, Photo Section to do the following:

a. Hold all originals (except loans) for a period of three months so that PSD and ourselves can compare these with those that come out at the other end of the system that are obviously inferior;

b. Experiment with various retouching techniques, both in our own shop and in PSD and OBGI, to see what can be done and at what cost;

c. Assess the manpower costs involved in a thorough review of all caption cards and photos being sent to PSD for either accessioning or for publication, i.e., estimate cost of introducing a central quality control point in DPSD.

2. Re the above requirements, request that you do the following:

a. Beginning Monday, 30 August, and every Monday thereafter until told otherwise, be prepared to present a comparison of the original photo and the published version. If no photos are available for comparison in a given week, then request that I be so notified.

b. Submit to me, by 0900 hours Friday, 27 August, an informal memo discussing the experimentation that has been conducted on retouching techniques, the results of such experimentation, and the cost in manhours and funds to do the retouching. Cost estimates must, of course, be based in part on the number of photos that must be retouched. Cite the basis for your estimate of the number of photos involved and the variations, if any, in kinds of retouching that is necessary, e.g., background only, facial features, etc. Also give me a recommendation on

~~ADMINISTRATIVE INTERNAL USE ONLY~~

SUBJECT: Upgrading the Quality of Still Photography

whether retouching should be done at the time of accessioning or when a photo is selected for publication and cite your reasoning.

c. In the same memo due this Friday, give me an estimate of the cost, in manhours and funds, if any, to establish a quality control point in DPSD to review all caption reports and photos being sent to PSD for either accessioning or for publication. Provide the basis for your estimates. Photos being sent for publication includes the selection of an appropriate mask at the quality control point.

d. In the same memo, also give me a recommendation on how we can handle quality control, in terms of organization and personnel.

3. The major responsibility for all aspects of the production of photography of high quality is properly that of the Photo Section of DPSD. We can no longer ignore and we cannot shirk this responsibility. We must and we will find a means of discharging this responsibility in a manner that will produce photography of much greater quality than that used heretofore. The efforts of all concerned personnel, from the Chief, PSB to all members of the Photo Section, must be concentrated on this problem.



Chief, Document and Pictorial Services Division

STAT

1 as the Chief SSG requested

~~1~~—A. Originals of photographs accessioned (except for loans) are being held in the Photo Section. Such originals are filed by lot number, CSLT number, OO number and Foreign Service Post. Duplicates of the captioned photographs are not being made. If it is desired that an extra copy of this material be made, it can be done.

2 - A. This requirement could best be met by requesting this information from [REDACTED], P.C. , ISG. The Photo Section does not see nor are they aware of all publications that contain photographs. To accomplish this it would be necessary for the Photo Section to make an extra copy of each photo, then attempt to obtain copies of all publications.

STAT

[REDACTED] receives, directly from PSD, the first copy of all publications along with the original material, including photographs, used to make up the publication *and can provide the necessary control number to enable the Photo Section to locate the original material if it has been retained*

STAT

~~Page 1~~

26 Aug. 1971

~~DRAFT~~

2 B. Experiments in Retouching

To date several samples of photographs which needed retouching have been sent to the Printing Services Division Graphics Arts shop for retouching. [] PSD, is following up on the completion of this work since the Graphics Art Shop would not give a date for the completion of this portion of the experiment.

STAT

The PSD Graphics Arts shop is working on retouching or spotting prints rather than negatives. Since this technique of air brushing and retouching the print is the same as that used by the OBGI art shop, no requirement for duplicate work was placed on OBGI. The Chief, SSG, was advised of this and agreed that there would be no need to duplicate the effort involved in this experiment.

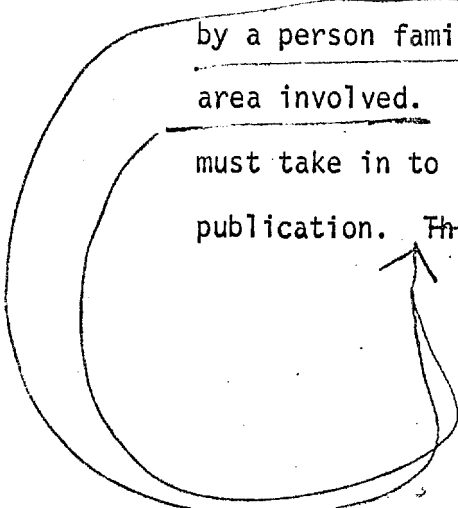
In addition, the Photo Section has attempted to retouch the negatives involved in this same series and has found that the retouching could not be done by persons not trained in this work if a product suitable for publications was desired. As part of this experiment, the Chief, Photo Section, has contacted various photographic and art supply houses in the Washington area and has not yet been able to locate the necessary materials to perform additional in house experiments. Efforts in this direction will continue.

Page 2

In addition to general retouching, i.e., removing lint, dust, etc., the technique of frisket or cutting out the image and placing it on a neutral background for rephotographing might be appropriate in certain cases, however, no experiments in this technique have been attempted since this represents a method to be used only in selected cases.

On the basis of discussion with persons in PSD/Graphics Arts, the easiest and most inexpensive method of accomplishing the type retouching necessary to improve the quality of the CRS product would involve retouching a print and rephotographing the retouched print. This technique requires between 1/2 to 1 1/2 hours per photograph depending upon the amount of area to be retouched.

Since the photo file does not reside in DPSD, it is not possible to determine the quantity of photographs that would require retouching. This could only be determined by an indepth review of the existing photographs in the file. Such a review could only be accomplished by a person familiar with the area and political situation in each area involved. Primary consideration for retouching of photographs must take in to account the potential for use of the photograph in a publication. ~~This information cannot be determined by DPSD personnel.~~



Insert

During fiscal year 1971 the ISG estimates that _____ photographs were used in Intelligence memoranda and Intelligence reports.

On the basis of my subjective review of 185 photographs in such publications, I feel 82 or 44% could have been improved by masking and 24 or 13% would require retouching to improve them.

Page 3

In all cases where it is determined that a photograph might possibly be used in a publication, I would recommend that retouching be done at the time of accessioning.


If such retouching were done at the time of accessioning, a negative for the production of a screen print as well as the master file negative and any necessary prints could^{all} be produced at the same time and be held in file by the area analyst in anticipation of publication, thus eliminating the need for disruptive crash requirements for photographs ~~for~~ ^{at the time} publication.

In summary, the following techniques may be used in retouching - no single one would apply to all cases:

1. Retouch the original photograph prior to preparing the master negative. In the case of loan material, prepare a work print, retouch ~~with~~ and produce the master file negative with the normal loss of resolution for the extra generations from the original.

Note: This method can be used by most accomplished artists familiar with opaque, water colors, pencil sketching, frisket and air brushing techniques.

2. Retouch the negative preparing a duplicate for storage in the master file.

Note: This technique requires a person skilled in etching  filling negative blemishes. Also this technique is least effective in correcting large areas which must be changed.

Page 4

although

The capability for retouching intelligence photography has been available, although not publicized for a number of years, However, in my tenure in this position, I only recall three requests for retouching service. It is realized that if a DPSD retouching capability existed, ~~it is certain that~~ this number would increase, however, to what extent, I have no way of estimating.

2 - C. Establishment of a Quality Control Point

Scope of the problem

To review for proper masking and possible retouching an estimated 21,546 personality and 19,614 ground photographs (FY-71) prior to the preparation of negatives.

Also, this control point should review all photos supplied to customers to insure maximum quality (22,582 personality, 127,675 ground FY-71)

Possible Solution

- A. The ideal solution to the problem of improved quality would be to have ^{a photo analyst and a typist} ~~a small group, probably one~~ for each area division, of photo analyst and typist, to handle all photo selection, framing and captioning. This group, under the supervision of a single individual, could then process all photography in a uniform manner. Such a group should be in constant touch with the various ISG area analysts who would provide information on the current situation in their area as well as assist in the development of requirements. Such a group would be responsible for maintaining and servicing the files of photographs for the area of their responsibility.
- In addition, if it is determined that the volume of retouching is sufficient to merit a retoucher on a full time basis, this individual would appropriately be placed in this group.

* It is of paramount importance that any quality control point be given the authority to make the final decision on what represents the best possible photo reproduction.

6. An alternative solution to the establishment of such group would be to establish 1 professional and 1 clerical support employee to this task of technical review of input and finished product. These employees could review the work received from the ISG areas adjusting masks, checking captions, etc., however, the primary masking should be done in the area divisions, particularly in the case of masking from groups, since the control point would have problems with identification *and selection*.

In general, it is felt that the quality control group should maintain the necessary supplies and related photographic materials necessary for the accomplishment of the overall photo mission. As stated previously, if the volume of retouching merits the assignment of a full time artist, this position should be included in this group.